

OUTFALL MONITORING SCIENCE ADVISORY PANEL (OMSAP) MEETING
Tuesday, September 24, 2002, 10:00 AM to 2:00 PM, MADEP Boston
FINAL MINUTES

ATTENDANCE

Members Present: Andy Solow, WHOI (chair); Bob Kenney, U Rhode Island; Judy Pederson, MIT/Sea Grant; and Juanita Urban-Rich, U Mass Boston.

Observers: Ellen Baptiste Carpenter, Battelle; Bruce Berman, Save the Harbor/Save the Bay; Peter Borrelli, Center for Coastal Studies; Denise Breitenicher, MWRA; Ed Bretschneider, Wastewater Advisory Committee; Todd Callaghan, MCZM; Cathy Coniaris, MADEP; David Dow, NMFS; Dave Duest, MWRA; Patricia Foley, Save the Harbor/Save the Bay; Maggie Geist, Association to Preserve Cape Cod; Carlton Hunt, Battelle; Russell Isaac, MADEP; Chris John, MWRA; Ken Keay, MWRA; Ben Kelly, Save the Harbor/Save the Bay; Wendy Leo, MWRA; Suh Yuen Liang, MWRA; Matt Liebman, EPA; John Lipman, Cape Cod Commission; Steve Lipman, MADEP; Stormy Mayo, Center for Coastal Studies; Mike Mickelson, MWRA; Tara Nye, Association to Preserve Cape Cod; Cornelia Potter, MWRA Advisory Board; Andrea Rex, MWRA; Steve Rhode, MWRA; Jack Schwartz, MADMF; Dave Taylor, MWRA; and Steve Tucker, Cape Cod Commission.

SUMMARY OF ACTION ITEMS & RECOMMENDATIONS

1. OMSAP recommended minor revisions to MWRA's list of monitoring questions (see page 2).

MINUTES

PUBLIC INTEREST ADVISORY COMMITTEE (PIAC) UPDATE

P. Foley said that today PIAC will be discussing their public communications strategy during the OMSAP's outfall monitoring review. At the July PIAC meeting, members present agreed to work to inform and educate the public about the review. PIAC would like to have public meetings during the monitoring review process and hopes that OMSAP members would agree to participate. PIAC will also be discussing a concern brought up by S. Tucker on not being able to attend EPA, MADEP, and MWRA inter-agency TSS exceedance meeting.

AUGUST 2002 TOTAL SUSPENDED SOLIDS (TSS) EXCEEDANCES

D. Duest and D. Breitenicher reviewed the August 2002 TSS exceedances. [For more information, go to: <http://www.mwra.state.ma.us/harbor/pdf/200208tpx.pdf>, <http://www.mwra.state.ma.us/harbor/pdf/20020824tpx.pdf>, and <http://www.mwra.state.ma.us/harbor/pdf/20020831mtpx.pdf>] OMSAP had a discussion about the incident. T. Callaghan asked if the operational changes made at the Deer Island Treatment Plant were implemented only during the upset, or if they were permanent changes. D. Duest replied that plant operations and staffing are back to normal now that the treatment plant is operating normally. He noted that the return sludge was chlorinated to prevent the growth of filamentous bacteria. D. Dow asked about the presence of filamentous bacteria before the incident. D. Duest replied that filamentous bacteria normally occur in the effluent in low numbers. A. Solow thought that the experiment with Nyacol was planned well, and though the magnitude of the impact to the treatment plant was unanticipated, MWRA staff responded well. J. Pederson agreed and added that we have the Contingency Plan to notify us of events like this. The process worked well, and we learned from it. R. Isaac noted that if the feed rate of the high-sulfate waste were lower, then this event would not have

occurred. D. Duest said that the MWRA technical staff recommended a lower feed rate, but Nyacol disagreed. R. Isaac asked where the high-sulfate waste is going now. D. Breitenicher replied that for the remainder of the experiment, the high-sulfate waste went to Fitchburg wastewater treatment plant and a treatment plant in New Jersey. Now that the experiment has been completed, the waste is being discharged back into the MWRA system at Nyacol's facility in Ashland. C. Hunt said that during the incident, the field team observed some evidence of the filamentous bacteria on nearfield surface waters. There was a lot of environmental sampling during the incident, including water quality sampling, caged mussel deployment, benthic sampling, USGS sampling, and a fecal coliform survey.

MWRA REVIEW OF OTHER WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANT MONITORING PROGRAMS

OMSAP requested at their July 2002 meeting that MWRA research how other wastewater treatment plants have conducted monitoring reviews to see if MWRA can learn from them. M. Mickelson presented the results of this review. [For more information, see MWRA's information briefing entitled "Review of Revision Processes for Other Marine Monitoring Programs", for a copy contact Cathy Coniaris at 617-348-4026]. M. Mickelson said that MWRA's approach for review is similar to the approach used by other wastewater treatment plants.

STATUS OF MONITORING QUESTIONS

W. Leo reviewed all of the monitoring questions used as a basis for MWRA's outfall monitoring program [For more information, see MWRA's information briefing entitled "Review of Monitoring Questions, for a copy contact Cathy Coniaris at 617-348-4026]. OMSAP then discussed whether any of the questions need to be revised, or if additional questions should be added.

ACTION: OMSAP recommends the following revisions to the monitoring questions:

Question #5: "What are the concentrations of contaminants in the influent and effluent and their associated variability?" *OMSAP requests clarification in the question regarding any studies being done to improve analytical methods.*

Question #29: "Are there any benthic community changes correlated with changes in levels of toxic contaminants (or sewage tracers) in sediments?" *OMSAP recommends that though there is argument to remove this question, that it remain at least until after the technical review workshops.*

MONITORING REVIEW WORKSHOP PLANNING

C. Coniaris reviewed the proposed topics for each of the two OMSAP technical workshops. There was some discussion about the order of the presentations. S. Tucker suggested the Federal Reserve in Boston and a venue in Yarmouth as good locations for the workshops. J. Pederson suggested that OMSAP be asked to frame questions they may have before the workshops take place.

ADJOURNED

MEETING HANDOUTS:

- Agenda
- September 2002 OMSAP/PIAC/IAAC membership lists
- July 2002 draft OMSAP minutes
- MWRA information briefings and copy of presentation

Summary prepared by C. Coniaris. Post-meeting comments are included in [brackets]. All such comments have been inserted for clarification only. They do not, nor are they intended to, suggest that

such insertions were part of the live meeting components and have been expressly set-off so as to avoid such inference.